

REMARKS

Claims 1-48 remain pending in this application. In the Office Action of April 25, 2005, all claims were rejected. Applicants hereby amend claims 1 and 18 and traverse the rejections as follows.

In view of the amendment and the following remarks, Applicants request reconsideration of this application.

Response to Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 35-37, 40-44, 46, and 48 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,892,905 issued to Brandt, et al. (hereinafter "Brandt"). Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

Claim 35 is directed to an equipment management system for tracking reservation information and equipment inventory information for a plurality of locations. The system includes a reservation information field having information pertaining to the type of equipment reserved and the date of reservation, and an equipment inventory field having information pertaining to the type of equipment and number of equipment available at each of the plurality of locations.

Applicant respectfully submits that Brandt does not teach all of the elements of claim 35. At page 4 of the Office Action, the Examiner notes that Brandt discloses displaying a reservation summary, and at page 8 of the Office Action, the Examiner notes that Brandt discloses a list of cars that are available at alternate rental locations. Applicants respectfully submit, however, that Brandt does not teach a reservation information field having information pertaining to the type of equipment reserved, as recited in claim 35. At most, Brandt appears to disclose only a reservation field for requesting a reservation. Applicants respectfully submit, therefore, that claim 35 is patentable over Brandt.

Each of claims 36-37, 40-44, 46 and 48 depends from and includes all of the limitations of claim 35. For the reasons discussed above, therefore, Applicants also submit that claims 36-37, 40-44, 46 and 48 also are patentable over Brandt.

Moreover, claims 36-37, 41-43, 46 and 48 also recite elements, in addition to those of claim 35, that Brandt does not teach or suggest. Specifically, claim 36 recites a scope selector having at least one scope criteria, wherein upon the selection of one of the at least one scope criteria, the reservation field provides information pertaining to the selected scope criteria. Brandt does not appear to teach or suggest such a scope selector.

Claim 37 depends from claim 36 and further recites that the at least one scope criteria is selected from one of a particular rental location, city, route and dealer. Brandt does not appear to teach or suggest such scope criteria selection.

Claim 41 depends from claim 40 and further recites a search field, wherein the search field includes a search request window, and upon activation of a search in the search field, the search field returns information pertaining to the search request. Brandt does not appear to teach or suggest such a search request window.

Claim 42 depends from claim 41 and further recites that the search request includes a request for a location having a particular piece of equipment, and the search result includes an identification of the location having the particular equipment. Brandt does not appear to teach or suggest such a search request. At the most, Brandt discloses that process step 2040 presents a list of cars available when a user selects an alternate location (see col. 23, lines 38-40).

Claim 43 depends from claim 35 and further recites an equipment dispatch field, the equipment dispatch field indicating the transfer of equipment from a dispatching location to a receiving location. Brandt does not teach or suggest such an equipment dispatch field.

Claim 46 depends from claim 44 and further recites a notes field having information pertaining to the history of a transaction with the customer. Brandt does not teach or suggest such a notes field.

Claim 48 depends from claim 35 and further recites a script page, wherein the script page incorporates information pertaining to a particular reservation. Brandt does not teach or suggest such a scripts page.

Applicants therefore submit, for the foregoing additional reasons, that claims 36-37, 41-43, 46 and 48 also are patentable over Brandt based on their recitation of these elements.

Response to Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1-7, 9-13, 15, 17-24, 26-30, 32 and 34

Claims 1-7, 9-13, 15, 17-24, 26-30, 32 and 34 stand rejected claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brandt in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,253,166 (hereinafter “Dettelbach”). Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

Dettelbach describes a travel reservation record keeping system that communicates with one or more airline customer computer reservation systems. The travel reservation record keeping system can be used to retrieve and organize pre-travel data for use by corporate clients (col. 1, lines 6-11). The system thereby provides a corporation with the ability to monitor company travel plans before the travel occurs to insure that corporate employees use available discounts and comply with corporate travel policies and contracts (col. 1, lines 16-22). The reporting feature allows the user to create a report showing reservation information for multiple travelers. One report that is available to the user is a car summary report, which apparently can list the car reservation detail shown in FIG. 3 and which can sort the information by car rental location (see col. 10, lines 28-33). Dettelbach does not address the problem of how to manage rental equipment availability among a plurality of retail locations. Rather, Dettelbach only teaches using the system described therein to allow a corporate customer to monitor company travel plans.

Claims 1 and 18 are independent claims, each of which is directed to a method of rental equipment management for a plurality of rental locations. The method of claim 1 includes displaying a reservation summary having reservation information pertaining to the type of equipment reserved and the date of reservation for a plurality of customer reservations, and tracking the equipment inventory information for each rental location. The method of claim 18 includes displaying on a screen in communication with a computer a reservation summary having reservation information pertaining to the type of equipment reserved and the date of reservation for a plurality of customer reservations, and tracking the equipment inventory information for each rental location. Each of claims 1 and 18 has been amended to clarify that the tracking of equipment information for each rental location is “for managing equipment availability at the plurality of rental locations.”

The Examiner argues that it would have been obvious to modify Brandt with the display capabilities of Dettelbach to provide customers with the ability to review multiple reservations (e.g., a hotel reservation and a car rental reservation) associated with a single event. Applicants respectfully submit, however, that it is improper to combine Dettelbach and Brandt. As discussed above, Dettelbach does not address the problem of managing equipment availability at a plurality of rental locations. Although Dettelbach describes a report that can include multiple reservations, neither Brandt nor Dettelbach suggests using such a report to manage equipment availability at rental locations. Dettelbach only teaches using the system described therein to monitor travel plans of employees of a company who are potential customers of rental locations. Dettelbach is not concerned at all with managing the availability of rental cars at the rental locations. Applicants respectfully submit, therefore that the conclusion to combine Brandt and Dettelbach is based on improper hindsight of Applicants' disclosure.

Even if it were proper to combine Brandt and Dettelbach, Applicants respectfully submit that these references, taken alone or in combination, do not teach a method having all of the steps of claims 1 and 18. For example, neither Dettelbach nor Brandt teaches or suggests tracking equipment inventory information for each of a plurality of rental locations for managing equipment availability at the plurality of rental locations.

Applicants respectfully submit, therefore, that claims 1 and 18 are patentable over Brandt in view of Dettelbach. Each of claims 2-7, 9-13, 15, 17, 19-24, 26-30, 32 and 34 depends from and includes all of the limitations of claim 1 or claim 18. For the reasons discussed above, therefore, Applicants also submit that claims 2-7, 9-13, 15, 17, 19-24, 26-30, 32 and 34 also are patentable over Brandt in view of Dettelbach.

Moreover, claims 2-7, 9-13, 15, 17, 19-24, 26-30, 32 and 34 also recite elements in addition to those of claim 1 or claim 18. Applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner has not specifically pointed out how Brandt and Dettelbach, alone or in combination, teach many of these additional elements. Specifically, Applicant respectfully submits that the Examiner has not specifically pointed out where either Brandt or Dettelbach teaches: customizing the scope of the reservation summary to display information pertaining to one of a particular rental location, city, route and dealer (claims 2 and 19); customizing the scope of the reservation summary to display

information pertaining to a particular type of reservation (claims 3 and 20) wherein the type of reservation is selected from one of confirmed, tentative and canceled reservations (claims 4 and 21); and customizing the scope of the reservation summary to display information pertaining to a particular route selection (claims 5 and 22) wherein in the route selection is selected from one of one-way rental and in-town rental (claims 6 and 23). Moreover, the Examiner has not specifically pointed out where either Brandt or Dettelbach teaches: updating the reservation information and the equipment information regularly (claims 7 and 24); equipment inventory information comprising the types of equipment available, the number of equipment designated for one-way use, the number of equipment designated for rotational use, and total equipment available (claims 9 and 26); searching the equipment inventory information to find a dispatching rental location having a particular piece of equipment (claims 10 and 27); dispatching the particular piece of equipment from the dispatching rental location to a receiving rental location, wherein the equipment inventory information is updated to reflect the dispatch of the equipment from the dispatching rental location to the receiving rental location (claims 11 and 28) and wherein the receiving rental location receives the particular piece of equipment and the equipment inventory information is updated to reflect the receipt of the equipment at the receiving rental location (claims 12 and 29); displaying payment information (claims 14 and 31); displaying notes that reflect the history of transacting with a customer (claims 15 and 32); verifying the compatibility of a requested towing combination, wherein the information pertaining to the towing vehicle and information pertaining to the towed vehicle are evaluated, and a determination is made as to the safety of the towing combination (claims 16 and 33); or generating a script for confirmation of reservation, wherein the script comprises information pertaining to a particular reservation (claims 17 and 34).

Applicants submit, therefore, that claims 2-7, 9-13, 15, 17, 19-24, 26-30, 32 and 34 also are patentable over Brandt and Dettelbach, either alone or in combination, based on their recitation of these additional elements.

Claims 6, 9, 23 and 26

Claims 6, 9, 23 and 26 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brandt in view of Dettelbach and further in view of the Ryder publication. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

The Examiner states that Ryder teaches one-way rental and that it would have been obvious to modify Brandt/Dettelbach with the display of one-way or in-town route information because it is important for vehicle tracking to determine if a rental truck will be returned to the original vendor or a different vendor. As discussed above, Applicants submit that it is improper to combine Brandt and Dettelbach. Applicants also submit that it is improper to combine Ryder with Brandt and Dettelbach for at least the reason that Dettelbach is not concerned with the problem of managing equipment availability at a plurality of rental locations.

Even if it were proper to combine the Ryder publication with Brandt and Dettelbach, Applicants respectfully submit that that combination does render claims 6, 9, 23, and 26 unpatentable. Each of these claims depends from and includes all of the limitations of claim 1 or claim 18. As discussed above, however, Brandt and Dettelbach do not teach all of the steps of amended claims 1 and 18. Likewise, Ryder does not teach or suggest these steps. For example, the Ryder publication does not teach or suggest tracking equipment inventory information for each of a plurality of rental locations for managing equipment availability at the plurality of rental locations. Thus, the combination of Brandt, Dettelbach and the Ryder publication does not teach or suggest the elements of claims 6, 9, 23, and 26.

Applicants respectfully submit, therefore, that claims 6, 9, 23, and 26 are patentable over Brandt in view of Dettelbach and further in view of the Ryder publication.

Claims 8 and 25

Claims 8 and 25 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brandt in view of Dettelbach and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,266,277 (hereinafter "Craig"). Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

For the reasons discussed above, Applicants respectfully submit that it is improper to combine Brandt and Dettelbach. Moreover, Applicants respectfully submit that it is improper to combine Brandt, Dettelbach and Craig for at least the reason that for at least the reason that

Dettelbach is not concerned with the problem of managing equipment availability at a plurality of rental locations.

Even if it were proper to combine Brandt, Dettelbach and Craig, Applicants respectfully submit that that combination does not teach all of the elements of claims 8 and 25. Claim 8 depends from and includes all of the limitations of amended claim 1. Claim 25 depends from and includes all of the limitations of amended claim 18. As discussed above, however, Brandt and Dettelbach do not teach the elements of amended claims 1 and 18. Likewise, Craig does not teach or suggest these elements. For example, Craig does not teach or suggest tracking equipment inventory information for each of a plurality of rental locations for managing equipment availability at the plurality of rental locations. Thus, the combination of Brandt and Craig does not teach or suggest the elements of claims 8 and 25.

Applicants respectfully submit, therefore, that claims 8 and 25 are patentable over Brandt in view of Craig.

Claims 38 and 39

Claims 38 and 39 stand rejected claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brandt in view of Craig. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

For the reasons discussed in Applicants' response of June 28, 2004, Applicants respectfully submit that it is improper to combine Brandt and Craig. Even if it were proper to combine Brandt and Craig, Applicants respectfully submit that that combination does not teach all of the elements of claims 38 and 39. Claims 38 and 39 depend from and include all of the limitations of claim 35. As discussed above, Brandt does not teach the elements of claim 35. Likewise, Craig does not teach or suggest these elements. For example, Craig does not teach or suggest a reservation information field having information pertaining to the type of equipment reserved. Thus, the combination of Brandt and Craig does not teach or suggest the elements of claims 38 and 39.

Applicants respectfully submit, therefore, that claims 38 and 39 are patentable over Brandt in view of Craig.

Claims 14 and 31

Claims 14 and 31 stand rejected claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brandt in view of Dettelbach and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,085,976 (hereinafter "Sehr"). Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

For the reasons discussed above, Applicants respectfully submit that it is improper to combine Brandt and Dettelbach. Moreover, Applicants respectfully submit that it would not have been obvious to modify Brandt and/or Dettelbach using Sehr. Sehr does not address reservation information or equipment tracking.

Even if it were proper to combine Brandt, Dettelbach and Sehr, Applicants respectfully submit that that combination does not render claims 14 and 31 unpatentable. Claim 14 depends from and includes all of the limitations of amended claim 1. Claim 31 depends from and includes all of the limitations of amended claim 18. As discussed above, however, Brandt and Dettelbach do not teach the elements of amended claims 1 and 18. Likewise, Sehr does not teach or suggest these elements. For example, Sehr does not teach or suggest a reservation information field having information pertaining to the type of equipment reserved. Thus, the combination of Brandt, Dettelbach and Sehr does not teach or suggest the elements of claims 14 and 31.

Applicants respectfully submit, therefore, that claims 14 and 31 are patentable over Brandt in view of Dettelbach and further in view of Sehr.

Claim 45

Claim 45 stands rejected claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brandt in view of Sehr. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

For the reasons discussed in Applicants' response of June 28, 2004, Applicants respectfully submit that it is improper to combine Brandt and Sehr. Even if it were proper to combine Brandt and Sehr, however, Applicants respectfully submit that that combination does not render claim 45 unpatentable. Claim 45 depends from and includes all of the limitations of claim 35. As discussed above, Brandt does not teach the elements of claim 35. Likewise, Sehr does not teach or suggest these elements. For example, Sehr does not teach or suggest a

reservation information field having information pertaining to the type of equipment reserved. Thus, the combination of Brandt and Sehr does not teach or suggest the elements of claim 45.

Applicants respectfully submit, therefore, that claim 45 is patentable over Brandt in view of Sehr.

Claims 16 and 33

Claims 16 and 33 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brandt in view of Dettelbach and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,344, 172 (hereinafter "Jaun"). Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

For the reasons discussed above, Applicants respectfully submit that it is improper to combine Brandt and Dettelbach. Moreover, Applicants respectfully submit that it would not have been obvious to modify Brandt and/or Dettelbach using Jaun. Jaun does not address reservation information or equipment tracking.

Even if it were proper to combine Brandt, Dettelbach and Jaun, Applicants respectfully submit that that combination does not render claims 16 and 33 unpatentable. Claim 16 depends from and includes all of the limitations of amended claim 1. Claim 33 depends from and includes all of the limitations of amended claim 18. As discussed above, however, Brandt and Dettelbach do not teach or suggest all of the steps of amended claims 1 and 18. Likewise, Jaun does not teach or suggest these steps. For example, Jaun does not teach or suggest tracking equipment inventory information for each of a plurality of rental locations for managing equipment availability at the plurality of rental locations.

Claim 47

Claim 47 stands rejected claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brandt in view of Juan. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

For the reasons discussed in Applicants' response of June 28, 2004, Applicants respectfully submit that it is improper to combine Brandt and Juan. Even if it were proper to combine Brandt and Juan, however, Applicants respectfully submit that that combination does not render claim 47 unpatentable. Claim 47 depends from and includes all of the limitations of claim 35. As discussed above, Brandt does not teach the elements of claim 35. Likewise, Jaun

does not teach or suggest these elements. For example, Jaun does not teach or suggest a reservation information field having information pertaining to the type of equipment reserved. Thus, the combination of Brandt and Jaun does not teach or suggest the elements of claim 47.

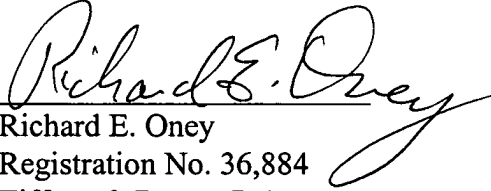
Applicants respectfully submit, therefore, that claim 47 also is patentable over Brandt in view of Jaun.

Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn. It is believed that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and that the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

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Respectfully submitted,


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Louis A. Lofredo, Paralegal

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